The Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) to aid teachers and students in keeping abreast of geography behind current news events.

GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

of
The National Geographic Society
WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

The National Geographic Society is a non-profit educational and scientific Society established for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.

VOLUME XXVII November 1, 1948 NUMBER 5

1. Newfoundland to Become Canadian Province Gray
2. Bridge Across English Channel Proposed Hoopes - Gray
3. Powers Agree on Italian Somaliland Aikman - Stewart
4. Covered Bridges Linger 'mid Traffic's Roar Aikman
5. Tai Shan Scaled by Stupendous Stairway Hoopes - Gray

B. ANTHONY STEWART

SPANNING THE HEADWATERS OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER, A COVERED BRIDGE LOOKS ALMOST LIKE ONE OF THE OUTBUILDINGS OF THIS NEW ENGLAND FARM

The crossing serves a single homestead near Pittsburg, New Hampshire. It is an "original," however, unlike a few covered spans which have been bought by hobbyists and placed on estates for atmosphere. On America's byways, hundreds of covered bridges are still in service (Bulletin No. 4).

Bulletin No. 1, November 1, 1948

Newfoundland to Become Canadian Province

CANADA may get a tenth province before the United States adds a forty-ninth state.

Newfoundlanders recently voted in favor of joining their rocky, cod-rich North Atlantic island to the Dominion of Canada. Negotiations now under way point to March 31, 1949, as Canada's date for making Newfoundland one of the family. A delegation from Newfoundland is now in Ottawa meeting with Canadian officials to iron out the details.

Hard Times Brought Colony Status

Visitors landing at Newfoundland on flights to Europe have expressed surprise upon learning that the bleak island is not part of Canada. They are always reminded by the proud islanders that their country is the oldest colony in the British Empire and was once a dominion itself.

Because of hard financial times in the early 1930's, Newfoundland became the first and only British dominion to surrender commonwealth rank and return to colony status. Improved conditions during World War II aroused the old urge for more freedom—either as a full-fledged dominion or a province of Canada.

When Canada accepts the new province, large-scale geographic and economic changes will take place. The huge dominion will move 200 miles nearer its mother country, for Newfoundland juts that far into the Atlantic beyond Canada's present easternmost point.

Canada's area—already considerably larger than that of the United States—will be increased by one twenty-fourth, or 152,734 square miles. This figure includes the 110,000 square miles of Labrador, Newfoundland's dreary coastal dependency that stretches northwest along the North American mainland to Hudson Strait.

Population Equals One-third of Montreal

Newfoundland itself, not counting Labrador, has 42,734 square miles. This Ohio-size territory outranks the three Maritime Provinces of Canada —Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The inclusion of Labrador in the area of the new province would not change its rank, for there is a tremendous jump in size between the Maritime Provinces and the six others.

In population, Newfoundland will add less to Canada. Its 318,000 inhabitants, including about 5,000 in Labrador, are equal only to one-third the population of Montreal, the dominion's largest city. But they would outnumber the inhabitants of one province—tiny Prince Edward Island.

In resources the new province would give Canada one of the world's greatest fishing grounds and a growing wood-pulp and paper industry. Perhaps more important, inland Labrador contains an iron-ore field believed to be as rich as the fabulous Mesabi deposits in Minnesota and much more extensive.

Its position, especially in an air age, gives Newfoundland war- and

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER APRIL 27, 1943, POST OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C., UNDER ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.
COPYRIGHT, 1948, BY THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY. INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT SECURED. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
SUBSCRIPTION TWENTY-FIVE CENTS FOR THIRTY WEEKLY ISSUES DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR. IN CANADA, FIFTY CENTS.

UMI

GILBERT GROSVENOR

IN AWNINGED AND RECLINING EASE, CHAIR PASSENGERS DESCEND TAI SHAN

This 15-mile path climbs the holy mountain which untold millions of pilgrims have ascended through the centuries (Bulletin No. 5). The poor walk up the 5,069-foot mountain, negotiating 6,700 steps. Around the bend in the middle distance begins the Dragon's Throat, final steep stretch below South Heavenly Gate (arrow). Occasional penitents prostrate themselves at every second step.

Bulletin No. 2, November 1, 1948

Bridge Across English Channel Proposed

PERENNIAL talk of some sort of vehicular crossing for the English Channel was revived recently when England's House of Commons listened to a proposal for a bridge to span the 20-mile-wide Strait of Dover between Great Britain and France.

In the past, most discussion of a Channel crossing concerned the possibility of a tunnel. Napoleons I and III liked the tunnel idea, which reached actual work stage in 1882. Construction was suspended the next year, but even today the idea persists.

Land Bridge Once Joined British Isles to Europe

Those proposing a bridge state that it would cost less than a tunnel and would take from five to ten years to complete. It would be the world's longest span:

Geologists believe a land bridge once joined the British Isles to the continent of Europe. This connection was worn away in the Ice Age, perhaps 10,000 years ago. Thus, in the blind workings of geology, the stage was set for the phenomenon of modern England—a small country wielding world-wide influence and power, protected from foreign invasion by the natural moat of the Channel.

Possibly because of its fateful role in history, the English Channel has been a constant challenge to mankind. Not only have William the Conquerors, Napoleons, and Hitlers contemplated the narrow strait with dreams of conquest, but other men with such lesser ambitions as swimming it, flying over it, or laying a telegraph cable across it have been attracted its way.

In the realm of swimming, the narrow, treacherous Strait of Dover has been successfully negotiated at least 25 times. Ten women share the honor, and one of the men crossed once in each direction. The first swimmer went across in 1875.

Balloonist Crossed in 1785

Where the swirling waters of the North Sea meet the ebb and flow of the Channel, crosscurrents, double tides, and whirlpools are created. Slack tide is unknown; gales, fog, and rough, choppy water prevail much of the year.

In the sky, pioneers of both lighter- and heavier-than-air soaring felt the challenge of the Channel soon after they discovered that man could be borne aloft. François Blanchard, French balloonist, made sensational news in 1785 by his two-hour passage from England to France.

In 1909, Louis Blériot rose in his biplane from French soil near Calais and reached England's chalk cliffs (illustration, next page) in 37 minutes. Now jet planes cover the distance in three minutes.

Only four years after Samuel Morse patented electric telegraphy in 1837, a cable was laid on the English Channel floor, providing telegraph communication between London and Paris.

Men in ships have challenged the Channel, in peace and in war, for centuries. Romans and Normans invaded Britain from the continent,

peace-time importance. It is the nearest North American land to Europe, lying only 1,875 miles from Ireland. A plane flying from New York to London is one-third of the way there before losing sight of the Newfoundland coast.

The United States, Canada, and private airlines have built great airports on the island or in Labrador. Gander and Goose Bay, two of them, have become familiar news datelines.

Even before the day of the airplane, Newfoundland was well established as a communications and transportation center. The pioneer Atlantic cable was laid in 1858 between Newfoundland and Ireland, and the first transocean wireless signal was sent in 1901 to Newfoundland from England.

The New World island's relative nearness to the British Isles probably helped in its early discovery by John Cabot—only five years after Columbus's first voyage to America.

NOTE: Newfoundland is shown on the National Geographic Society's map of Canada, Alaska & Greenland. Write the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C., for a price list of maps.

For additional information, see "Newfoundland, North Atlantic Rampart," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for July, 1941; and "The Sealing Saga of Newfoundland," July, 1939.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, December 1, 1947, "Sea Dominates Lives of Newfoundlanders"; and "Newfoundland's Sealing Fleet Sails Again," March 25, 1946.

CAPTAIN ROBERT A. BARTLETT

BETWEEN BARREN HILLS AND THE SEA, BRIGUS TELLS THE STORY OF MOST NEWFOUNDLAND VILLAGES: ONCE IT WAS A BUSY FISHING, SEALING, AND SHIPBUILDING PORT

Bulletin No. 3, November 1, 1948

Powers Agree on Italian Somaliland

ITALIAN Somaliland has the distinction of being one of the subjects on which the Western powers and the Russians have agreed. It is reported that both camps are willing to have this easternmost country of Africa returned to Italian rule.

From the tip of the "African Horn" to British Kenya, Italian Somaliland stretches southwestward along the east coast of the continent for 1,200 miles. A land of heat and far horizons, it extends inland to the highlands of Ethiopia and British Somaliland for distances varying from 200 to 250 miles. This long stretch of land could easily contain California. So much of it is rocky desert, from inland plateau to beach, that it has been called "an expanse of nothing in particular."

Italian Blackout Endangered Shipping

Early in World War II, the British took over the dry, torrid territory. At that time it was particularly important because its northern Gulf of Aden shore overlooks the Mediterranean-Red Sea-Indian Ocean lane between the United Kingdom and the East.

Before British occupation in 1941, the Italians blacked out Guardafui Lighthouse at the point of the Horn. This increased the dangers of the rocky coast for British convoys and other shipping.

At the end of the war, Italian Somaliland, with an area of nearly 200,000 square miles, had only about 5,000 Italian inhabitants. This was one-tenth the number in Italy's much smaller Red Sea colony, Eritrea. Somaliland natives outnumber the scant European population by more than a million.

The Somalis are a mixture of Arab, Danakil, Ethiopian, Negro, and a number of other north African races. They are believed to be descendants of peoples who came across the Red Sea from southern Arabia, possibly as early as 400 A.D.

Their mixed blood shows in their varying shades of skin from light to dark brown (illustration, next page). They are generally slender and fairly tall, and their features are oftener Caucasian than Negroid.

The Somali language is derived from Galla and shows traces of Arabic. It is not a written language. Although few Somalis speak Arabic, it is the language of trade and worship. Most of the Somalis are Moslems.

Herds Supply the Chief Foods

Many of the Somalis lead a primitive nomad life. If they are not exactly "chasing rainbows," they are at least following the rains in search of green pastures for the cattle, goats, sheep, and camels that form their chief wealth. Scarcity of water and grazing land may be to blame for the age-old struggles and blood feuds between various tribes.

The Somalis of the open country live in desert tents and rough huts. Meat and milk are their principal foods, with occasional luxuries which they pick up in towns and villages.

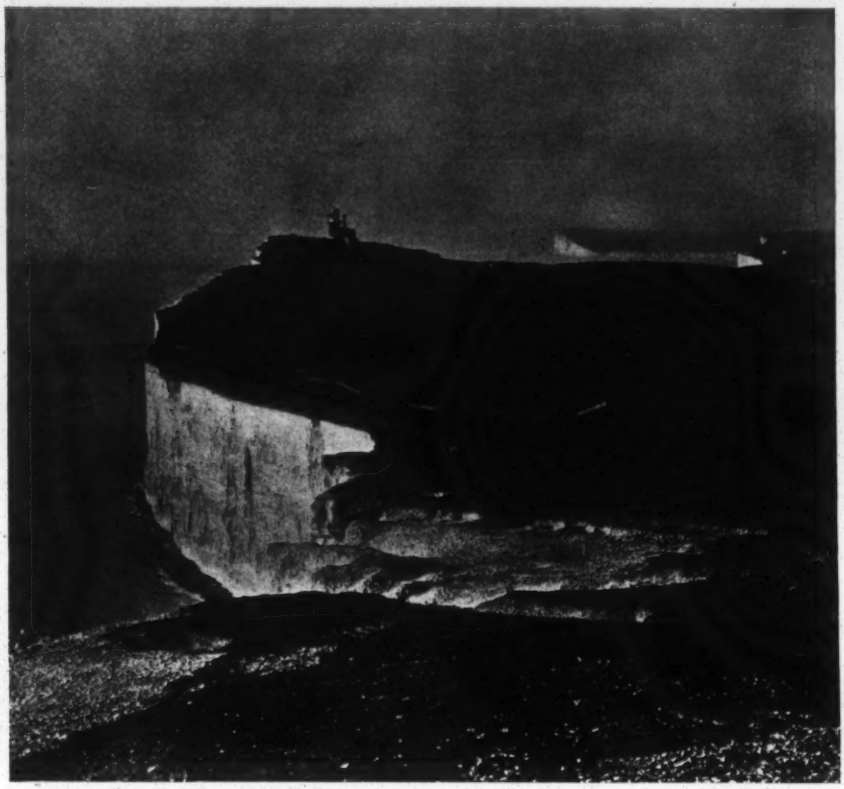
In simple thatched-hut communities around the water holes and near the banks of the few rivers, the settled Somalis raise dates, grains, and

while Spaniards, French, Germans, and others were thwarted. Seasoned ocean voyagers along with new travelers often get seasick on the routine 22-mile steamer run between Calais, France, and Dover, England.

Allied forces breached Europe from England in 1944. An outstanding Channel conquest of the next year was Operation Pluto. This wartime project made it possible to lay undersea pipelines in a matter of hours between points on the British and French coasts. Twenty were laid, capable of carrying up to a million gallons of gasoline a day to the Allied Expeditionary Forces.

NOTE: The English Channel and the Strait of Dover are shown on the Society's Modern Pilgrim's Map of the British Isles.

For further information on the Channel and adjacent shores, see "Winning the War of Supply" and "Oil for Victory Piped under the Sea" (9 photographs), in the *National Geographic Magazine* for December, 1945; "London Wins the Battle," August, 1945*; "Dover, Front-line Town of Britain's Siege," January, 1944*; and "The Penn Country in Sussex," July, 1935. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included in a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00.)*



W. ROBERT MOORE

ENGLAND'S DAZZLING CHALK CLIFFS HAVE LOOKED ON CHANNEL CROSSINGS BY SHIP AND PLANE

Higher even than Dover's famous chalk cliffs to the east, Beachy Head rises—a perpendicular white wall—532 feet from the waters of the English Channel. The lighthouse peering over the sharp edge of the headland from a point beyond has been superseded by one built in the sea at the foot of Beachy Head. It keeps ships from the rocky coast. Similar spectacular chalk walls edge the French coast of the sleeve-shaped Channel, which, to the French, is "La Manche" (the sleeve).

Bulletin No. 4, November 1, 1948

Covered Bridges Linger 'mid Traffic's Roar

THE covered bridge—that sentimental link with trout fishing and swimming holes, with old millstreams and romantic trysts—has by no means gone with the wind of modern traffic. Motorists who have never seen one are just taking the wrong turns into speed lanes instead of exploring the byways and roads still dotted with these symbols of a slower-moving age (illustration, cover).

More than five hundred covered bridges remain in Ohio alone, and at least four other states list more than one hundred and fifty of the horse-and-buggy relics.

2,000 Covered Bridges in the United States

Some of the old-timers, like one survivor in Blair County, Pennsylvania, are reported to be converting to steel underpinnings and new shingles on top. Even brand-new covered bridges are being built, with Oregon and Maine reporting recent instances.

In all, it is estimated there are at least 2,000 covered bridges throughout the United States. Most of them are east of the Mississippi, though the West is well represented. New England, once a leader, now trails other sections (illustration, next page).

Covered-bridge hobbyists and highway officials have turned up some revealing, if not always unanimous, figures concerning these reminders of a bygone rural America. One census counted 300 such spans in Oregon; about 250 on Pennsylvania State highways alone; nearly 200 in Indiana; and 160 in Vermont.

National Society for Preservation of Bridges

Floods and weathering, along with the demands of traffic, continue to take toll of the old bridges. On the other hand, many are now being saved through the efforts of interested individuals, historical societies, and highway commissions.

The United States has a sizable band of covered-bridge "collectors," whose activities may involve anything from taking pictures to buying the spans for use on estate or farm. There is a national society for the study and preservation of these bridges, and a national publication devoted entirely to news on the subject.

"Walk Your Horse or Pay Fine"

Many covered bridges, retained for sentiment or minor use, still stand near the new steel structures that replaced them. Others have been moved and set up over streams in state parks or at fairs. Here and there, modern drivers pass through mellow portals bearing the old sign, "Walk your horse or pay two dollars fine."

The heyday of this kind of bridge—built in various styles, with solid or latticed sides—was between 1830 and 1880. Experts say the evidence indicates that few, if any, were built before the early 1800's. The bridges were always constructed entirely of wood.

other crops. They fish off the long coast. Their trade, especially in the north, includes dealing in aromatic gums, hides, sheepskins, and mother-of-pearl.

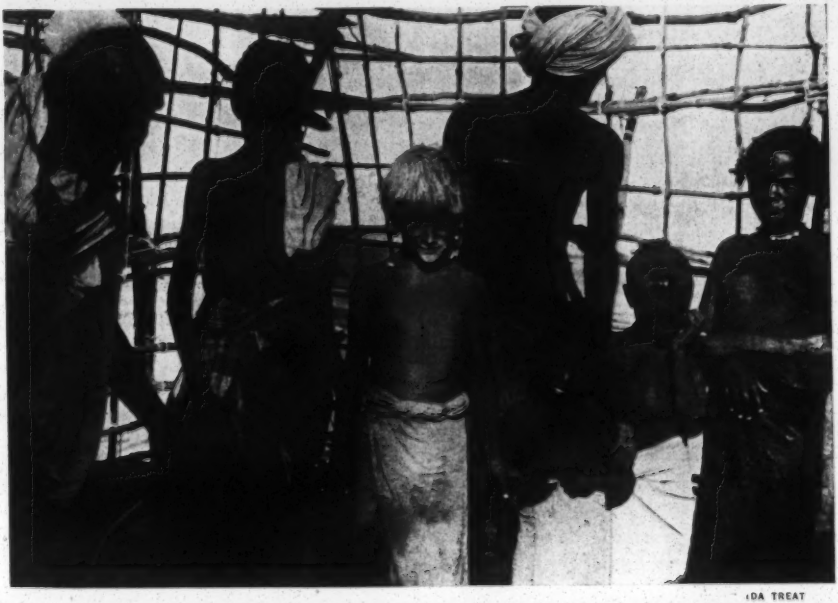
Mogadiscio is the capital and the leading Indian Ocean port. The city is surprisingly modern. Its buildings are electrically lighted, its streets are paved. During 1935 and 1936, when the Italians were conquering Ethiopia, they used their Somaliland colony as a base, and as a gateway to its ill-fated neighbor. This brought a rapid increase of Mogadiscio's population. By 1940 the capital's inhabitants numbered 45,000.

During the Italian period, irrigation projects were launched in the more cultivated south, around the Scebeli and Giuba (Juba) rivers. The Giuba is the only year-round stream reaching the open sea. Cotton, sugar cane, and bananas were exported to Italy. Leather making, fish canning, and salt production were encouraged. Roads were built.

Italy was late in taking on an African empire. It began to occupy parts of the Somali coast toward the end of the 19th century. Territories added later included the region around the Giuba River, which was transferred from British Kenya after World War I, in recognition of Italy's part in that struggle.

NOTE: Italian Somaliland is shown on the Society's map of Africa.

See also "Sailing with Sindbad's Sons," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for November, 1948; "Pearl Fishing in the Red Sea," November, 1947; and "Sailing Forbidden Coasts," September, 1931; and, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, October 15, 1945, "Italy's Recently Acquired Empire Grew Under Mussolini."



IDA TREAT

FROM TAN TO BROWN TO BLACK RUN THE SKIN SHADES OF THIS SOMALI GROUP

The Somalis, who gave their name to the land, show the variety of their ancestry. These tribesmen, posing for their picture before the skeleton frame of a native hut, differ naturally in their features and complexions. Nearly every member of the group has a different hairdo, to further vary their appearance. The blond locks of the youngster with the bowl haircut (center) were probably dyed.

Bulletin No. 5, November 1, 1948

Tai Shan Scaled by Stupendous Stairway

THE world's greatest stairway, globe travelers believe, climbs Tai Shan, highest of China's five sacred mountains. Tai Shan, in beleaguered central Shantung, is 25 miles south of Tsinan, Shantung Province's double-walled and moated capital recently taken by communist forces after a three-month siege.

There are some 6,700 stone steps in Tai Shan's summit-reaching stairway. The steps cover only the steeper rises of the mountain's 15-mile *Pan Lu*, or Pilgrim Way. Untold millions of pilgrims through over 40 centuries have struggled to the 5,069-foot summit to worship "nearest Heaven." Lucky thousands have been carried up, being rich enough to hire a chair and bearers.

Confucius Went to the Mountain

Peacetime visitors in the spring have often numbered 10,000 a day. Annually, on October 10, Chinese Republic Day, every school child and every soldier for miles around joins the worshiping stream of humanity climbing Tai Shan. The pilgrims have caused the winding route to become ever more lined with holy temples and towers, and with tea houses and huts to cater to the crowds.

According to tradition, the mountain was established as "holy" when the Emperor Shun climbed it 22 centuries before Christ and proclaimed himself the "son of Heaven." Confucius, China's great "golden rule" teacher of 500 B.C., made the ascent. Today Tai Shan is revered especially by Taoists, the 43 million superstitious followers of Lao-tze, a philosopher who lived at the same time as Confucius.

The true pilgrim first worships at ancient Tai Temple, in the walled village of Taian. He then passes through the North Gate to start the mountain ascent past myriad shrines with flowery names. At each he gives at least one coin.

There are the Heavenly Book Temple, the Temple of the Divine Employee, the two Halls of Brighter Vision, the Tower of Ten Thousand Fairies, the Heavenly Teapot Tower, the Temple of Fairy Dreams, Lotus Flower Peak, and Cliff of the Love of Life. Such appellations mark the Chinese as masters in the art of coining pleasing place names.

Sightseers Swell Throng

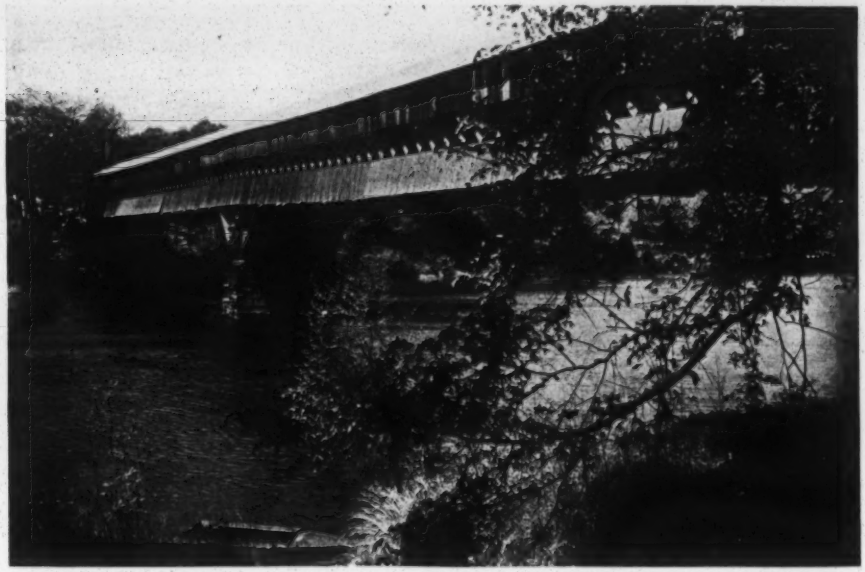
Passing through the South Heavenly Gate, the toiling penitent climbs a hogback ridge and comes at last to the Temple of the Jade Emperor, Taoism's supreme divinity. At the base of the last long flight of steps to the temple is the Tablet Without Inscription (illustration, next page). Adding to its mystery is geologists' testimony that its stone was not quarried on Tai Shan.

Trees in bloom or in fruit add their beauty to part of the route in season. Pines planted as memorials help to break bleak expanses of barren rock. Among the streaming pilgrims on foot and in chairs are many Chinese sightseers who come not to worship but to witness the historic scene.

UMI

It is agreed that the covering was developed chiefly to protect the bridge timbers. But people argue many other advantages. Some say the wooden tunnels made it easier to get skittish livestock across turbulent streams. Others point to the space made available for the old patent medicine and circus ads.

Covered bridges are still found around the world, from Scandinavia to China. The oldest is believed to be the Kapell span at Lucerne, Switzerland. Built in 1333, it contains much of the original material, in spite of repairs and replacements.



CLIFTON ADAMS

SUCH SPANS AS THIS GAVE NEW ENGLAND A REPUTATION AS THE COVERED-BRIDGE CENTER OF THE COUNTRY

Floods in the 1930s destroyed this bridge and many other covered crossings in this section (10 in one Massachusetts county alone), reducing the New England states to also-rans in covered-bridge censuses. Vermont, leading New England state with 160 of the wooden relics, trails Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. This lattice-sided structure, which connected Norwich, Vermont, and Hanover, New Hampshire, was named for John Ledyard, adventurous Dartmouth freshman who, in 1772, embarked here in a dugout canoe to see the world. He accompanied Captain Cook on his third voyage around the world, keeping a journal which he published after the trip. Later he traveled across northern Europe and through Siberia to Irkutsk, where he was arrested by Catherine the Great and ushered from Russia. He was ready to embark on an expedition across Africa when he died in Cairo, Egypt, 1789—38 years old.

The following order form may be used (or copied) for requesting the BULLETINS: School Service Department, National Geographic Society, Washington 6, D. C.

Kindly send ..... copies of the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS weekly for one school year for classroom use to

Name .....

Address for sending BULLETINS .....

City ..... State .....

I enclose, for each subscription, 25 cents (in United States or its possessions; in Canada, 50 cents in U. S. Funds): Total amount .....

Also, beggars, peddlers, hermits, priests, and sellers of charms and incense come to reap a financial harvest. Crippled beggars on busy days may fare especially well, for to give is considered an act of piety, bringing spiritual reward. The beggars sit in the middle of the path so that chair riders pass over them.

Crude but practical is the awninged chair evolved for use on the Pan Lu. It is lightly built of bamboo and rope. Because the stairs are wide, the two bearers climb them side by side, thus not tilting the chair. The weight is cleverly divided between shoulders and hands. Strangely, nearly all bearers, in this stronghold of Taoism and Buddhism, are Mohammedans.

Accidents are rare, even though energetic bearers may make the descent in two hours (illustration, inside cover), plunging down the steepest stairs in a manner that terrifies their passengers.

NOTE: The holy mountain may be located on the Society's map of China, where it is labeled "Tai." (The word Shan means mountain.)

For further information, see "Tai Shan, Sacred Mountain of the East," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for June, 1945.

GILBERT GROSVENOR

PILGRIMS, CHINESE AND FOREIGN, STAND ATOP TAI SHAN IN THE TEMPLE OF THE JADE EMPEROR

The enclosed stones in the foreground are "Tai Shan's Highest Peak" as the characters over the arch say. Chinese call them "the rocks which fell from Heaven." Through the arch rises the Tablet Without Inscription, on which only the word "Ti" (God) is engraved. Measuring 15 feet high and three by four feet in width and breadth, the heavy stone was somehow transported to its lofty perch by man power centuries ago.

UMI